

Paris 1 September 1971

MEMORANDUM TO GENERAL HAIG

Call on Chinese Ambassador:

From. V.A. Walters

Following your call on the evening (Paris time) of Aug 31st. I called the Chinese Embassy and made arrangements to see the Ambassador on the morning of 1 Sept. I spoke to Tsao.

At 0730 on September I met courier Middleton at Orly. His plane arrived a half hour early. Took him into the office and took cognizance of the contents of the envelope he brought me from you. At 11 a.m. Paris time I called alone at the Chinese residence in Neuilly and was received as usual by Wei and Tsao and very shortly afterwards we were joined by the Ambassador.

The meeting was cordial as always but it seemed to me that I detected a sort of embarrassment on their part at the fact that they had not yet had an answer to the questions asked by Dr. Kissinger when he saw them on 16 Aug. They did not say flatly that they had not had an answer but this was clear to me and I did not press them in order not to increase their embarrassment.

I then read the Oral note, first in English for Tsao and then in French for Wei, both of whom took careful note of it. Following that I added the additional oral message contained in your tab B. They also took careful note of this and as instructed I then handed them the text of the proposed announcement and added that our preferred date was the 21st as instructed verbally by you, as well as the rest of your telephone instructions. They seemed a little confused at these dates but I explained them to their satisfaction, mentioning that the Anchorage trip was due to the passage there of the Emperor of Japan as related by Dr. Kissinger the last time he saw Ambassador Huang Chen. This brought dawn and comprehension.

The Ambassador then said that he would see Dr. Kissinger on the morning of the 11th subject of course to Peking's authorization. He also asked whether it was our desire to make the announcement concerning the President's visit and Dr. Kissinger's visit at the same time, and I replied that is what I understood from the text of the announcement which we were submitting to them. He understood fully why there were blank dates in our proposed text.

That was about all there was in substance, but there was as much usual chit chat as on other occasions. The Ambassador said that he hoped that the Emperor of Japan would not return to the deeds of early in his reign, such as attacking China and Pearl Harbor. I said that the Emperor was now the symbol of the Nation and the Ambassador said that real power was in Sato's hands. The Ambassador then said that it was very interesting that the channel for messages between the two governments passed through the hands of soldiers (himself and me) For the first time in history Mankind had the means to destroy itself. China was dedicated to peaceful coexistence and would do everything to bring this about. I replied that when the Chinese got to know America better they would find that this was true of us too. For many years we had had the monopoly of an absolute weapon and had never chosen to use it. He nodded. He then asked whether I had enjoyed my vacation in the U.S. I replied that vacation was a grandiose word as I had been in Washington from Monday to Friday and had spent Saturday and Sunday at my brothers returning to Paris on the following Monday. Thus my vacation had lasted two days.

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PA/HO, Department of State
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I said however that I had no complaints to make as my work was most interesting. He leaned forward, tapped me on the knee and said "it is most important for all of mankind."

Ambassador Huang then then asked me whether my Soviet Colleagues had ever asked me about Sino American relations. I answered truthfully that they never had. He then asked whether the Soviets knew about Dr. Kissinger's trips in secrecy to Paris. I replied that I did not know for sure, but that experience with the Russians had convinced me that they were very intelligent but were not all 2 meters tall. He roared with laughter and slapped me on the back.

He then asked me what I did for exercise other than bicycling, (another demonstration of biographic expertise) and I replied that I skied in the winter and swam in the summer when I had time. Unlike many Americans I walked a great deal. I said that in my country with 220 million people there were about 100 million cars and this was not conducive to much walking (He seemed staggered at the figures and asked me to repeat them) however we still did quite well in the Olympic Games. I then noted that a Chinese jumper had recently set a world mark and he said that this man had done even better more recently. He then said that recently he had raced an elderly Frenchman who though more than 80 years of age could still race. I asked who had won and he said that he had taken his opponent's age into account and the race had ended in a tie. I then said that I could see why he had been made an Ambassador. He looked pleased at this and said that we were both soldiers but he was a beginner at diplomacy. I said this was true of me too. (No thunderbolts from heaven struck the Chinese Embassy during this exchange). I then told him the story about the man who asked what was the difference between the military and the diplomats and another man had replied "None. They both do nothing, but the military do it very early in the morning in complete discipline and the diplomats do it late in the afternoon in utter confusion." He laughed and said it must surely have been a politician who said that.

All of this was in the usual room in the Chinese Embassy, accompanied by Jasmine Tea, preserved apples and rice wine (I had only one glass and it tastes nearly as bad as Vodka). There were two new elements, excellent Chinese Ravioli and some small shrimp cakes, which like Lichee nuts I eat only in the service of my country. Only Dr. K apparently rates incense. There was none for me.

There was more or this but I will not bore you with the detail. My stay with them lasted about 45 minutes. I went there on foot and as far as I could tell (which is not far) I was unobserved. I was ushered to the door by all three as usual.